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TO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652:NA

TAGS: IS, ICEM

SUBJECT: INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR EUROPEAN
MIGRATION (ICEM)

1. AS WE APPROACH THE MAY SESSION OF ICEM'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR U.S. MISSION AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL TO HAVE A GENERAL REVIEW WITH ICEM DIRECTOR THOMAS ON HOW HE SEES THE WORK OF ICEM DEVELOPING DURING THE COURSE OF THE YEAR AND TO ACQUAINT HIM WITH OUR OWN THINKING IN THE PROCESS. THE ISSUES WE FACED IN 1975 WHICH WERE THE SUBJECT OF DEBATE AT THE LAST COUNCIL SESSION WERE LARGELY DEFERRED FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION THIS YEAR. IN THE INTERVENING PERIOD MUCH OF THE FOCUS HAS BEEN ON SPECIAL OPERATIONS IN THAILAND, THE PROPOSAL FOR A RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM FOR RETURNEES FROM ANGOLA FROM PORTUGAL, ARRANGEMENTS FOR KURDISH REFUGEES TO BE PROCESSED IN FRANKFURT, AND MORE RECENTLY, THE ACTIVITIES IN BEIRUT AND ATHENS ON BEHALF OF ASSYRIANS AND THE ARMENIANS.

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2. ICEM HAS BEEN HANDLING ALL THESE MATTERS IN ADDITION TO

KEEPING PACE IN TERMS OF RESETTLEMENT WITH THE FLOW OF REFUGEES FROM EASTERN EUROPE. ICEM'S EFFECTIVENESS AND INGENUITY HAVE AGAIN BEEN TESTED WITH GOOD RESULTS. HOWEVER, THE UNDERLYING DIFFICULTIES THAT FACE THE ORGANIZATION WHICH ARE LARGELY OF A FINANCIAL NATURE HAVE NOT BEEN RESOLVED, AND THEY WILL REQUIRE OUR ATTENTION AT THE UPCOMING SESSION. WE WILL DO OUR BEST TO BE CONSTRUCTIVE AND IMAGINATIVE AND HOPE THAT OTHER PARTICIPANTS WILL BE SIMILARLY MOTIVATED.

3. IT IS OUR FIRM CONVICTION, IN VIEW OF THE LARGE NUMBER OF UNSETTLED REFUGEES AND THE PROSPECTS FOR MORE, THAT ICEM HAS JUST ABOUT ALL THE WORK IT CAN REASONABLY MANAGE. THE HUMAN PROBLEMS WHICH ARE CLEARLY IDENTIFIED AND WHICH FALL WELL WITHIN ICEM'S TERMS OF REFERENCE SHOULD RECEIVE THE FULLEST CONCENTRATION AND APPLICATION OF RESOURCES. WE BELIEVE THAT ALL ICEM MEMBER GOVERNMENTS SHOULD SUPPORT NOT ONLY MORALLY BUT FINANCIALLY ICEM'S CURRENT PROGRAM ACTIVITIES.

4. IN OUR LETTER DATED MARCH 30 TO THE ICEM DIRECTOR WHICH WAS CHanneled VIA THE MISSION WE EXPRESSED OUR DISAGREEMENT WITH PROPOSALS TO REVISE ICEM'S CONSTITUTION AND EXPAND THE ORGANIZATION'S SCOPE ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE PRESENTLY DEFINED MISSION AND PURPOSE OFFER MORE THAN SUFFICIENT CHALLENGE. ICEM AS IT IS PRESENTLY CONSTITUTED IS A UNIQUE ORGANIZATION WITH A CAPABILITY TO HANDLE REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT ACTIVITY ON A GLOBAL BASIS. WE CANNOT OVEREMPHASIZE OUR FEELING THAT ANY MAJOR SHIFT AWAY FROM TRADITIONAL ACTIVITIES COULD JEOPARDIZE THE ORGANIZATION'S FUTURE, INCLUDING ESSENTIAL U.S. SUPPORT. WE HOPE THAT THE OFFICIAL U.S. RESPONSE TO SUCH PROPOSALS WILL BE REVIEWED SERIOUSLY AS AN ACCURATE REFLECTION OF ALL OF THOSE IN WASHINGTON CONCERNED WITH SUCH MATTERS. WE ALSO HOPE THAT OTHER GOVERNMENT MEMBERS HAVE TREATED THE QUESTION WITH EQUAL SERIOUSNESS.

5. THE PROCESS OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR FY-1976 REFUGEE PROGRAMS IS ABOUT TO WIND-UP WITH RELATIVELY DISAPPOINTING RESULTS. THERE IS NO BASIS FOR MUCH MORE OPTIMISM FOR
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FY-1977. THESE EXPERIENCES HAVE REINFORCED OUR VIEW THAT THERE IS A NEED FOR CLARIFICATION OF THE TASKS AT HAND. THERE IS THE CONSTANT THEME THAT THERE ARE TOO MANY ORGANIZATIONS DOING THE SAME THING AT TOO HIGH A COST TO THE U.S. WHILE THESE VIEWS ARE NOT NEW, THEY ARE MORE INTENSE. ANY FURTHER DUPLICATION OF SERVICES OR OVERLAPPING OF MISSIONS WOULD REINFORCE THE DOUBTS OF THOSE WHO MAKE THE FINAL JUDGEMENTS ON U.S. APPROPRIATIONS

LEVEL. THE BROAD MISSIONS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE TWO MAJOR ORGANIZATIONS CONCERNED WITH ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES ARE GENERALLY DEFENSIBLE IN THEIR PRESENT FORM. ANY CHANGES WOULD GREATLY COMPLICATE THE MATTER. ICEM IN ITS PRESENT FORM AND WITH ITS PRESENT CAPABILITY SERVES USG INTERESTS. THUS WE FEEL STRONGLY THAT WELL ENOUGH SHOULD BE LEFT ALONE.

6. IN MAKING THESE POINTS WITH THOMAS U.S. MISSION SHOULD ASSURE THOMAS THAT WE CONTINUE TO BE HIGHLY SATISFIED WITH THE WAY IN WHICH ICEM IS FUNCTIONING, ESPECIALLY IN THE HANDLING OF SPECIAL PROGRAMS. IT IS EFFECTIVELY SERVING OUR INTERESTS IN FACILITATING THE RESETTLEMENT OF REFUGEES AND THERE NEED BE NO APPREHENSIONS OVER CONTINUED U.S. SUPPORT FOR ICEM'S BASIC MISSION. KISSINGER

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